

COVID-19 FAQs

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What is COVID-19?

COVID-2019, also known as the coronavirus, is a respiratory infection caused by a novel (new) virus that was first detected in December 2019. Once a person is infected, the virus causes respiratory illness.

What are common symptoms of COVID-19?

According to the CDC, symptoms may appear anywhere between **2-15 days** after exposure. Common symptoms include **fever, cough and shortness of breath**.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is mainly spread by **person to person contact**. A person can also get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object with the virus on it, then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. While the virus is thought to be most contagious when an infected person shows symptoms, there are reports that spread is possible when an infected person is asymptomatic.

If I start to experience symptoms, what should I do?

If you start to experience symptoms and have come in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19, contact your primary care provider **by phone** and notify them of your condition. Do **NOT** go to your health care provider's office without **calling ahead**.

What other precautionary takes should I take?

1. **Hygiene:** Practice good hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially when handling food or using the restroom.
2. **Limit contact:** Avoid shaking hands and touching your face.
3. **Clean and Disinfect:** Regularly disinfect frequently touched surfaces or objects like doorknobs with cleaning chemicals.
4. **Respiratory Etiquette:** Practice good respiratory etiquette like covering your coughs and sneezes.
5. **Travel:** Don't travel if you have a fever and cough. If you have upcoming travel plans, check the [CDC's Travel Health Alerts](#).

Do I need to wear a face mask?

According to CDC guidelines, you do NOT need to wear a facemask if you are not sick, UNLESS you are a caregiver to someone who is. If you are sick, you should wear a facemask when you are around other people.

What has Congress done so far?

On March 4th, Congress approved **\$8.3 billion** in new emergency funding dedicating to combating the spread of COVID-19. This funding included more than \$3 billion for the development of treatments and a vaccine; it also included an additional \$300 million to ensure Americans will have access to the vaccine regardless of their ability to pay. NJ has already received **\$13.8 million** so far in federal funds to support COVID-19 response efforts. More information can be found [here](#).

I'm a small business owner impacted by this epidemic—what are my options?

The emergency funding package included approximately **\$7 billion for low-interest SBA loans** to small business owners experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 outbreak. SBA is currently working to put specific guidance for business owners on their website. Right now, the best thing that business owners can do is to contact Governor Murphy's office to state their case, because each state needs to demonstrate small business need in order to access federal funding.

How can I stay informed?

New Jersey has opened a 24-hour hotline that's staffed by trained medical professionals ready to answer your questions, and translation services are available. Your call is free — **1-800-222-1222**.

Follow [this link](#) to subscribe to my newsletter, where I'll be providing important updates on the COVID-19 outbreak, and additional information on the federal, state and local response. You can also follow my pages on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), which I regularly update with information that may be useful to you as it relates to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Additionally, [click here](#) for more information on the NJ Department of Health's efforts.